



FULFILLING OUR PROMISES
TO THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVED

Remarks for National Guest
Department Conventions
2019

Acknowledge introduction, distinguished guests, and DAV Auxiliary officers and members, as well as others in the audience.

Opening Remarks

Everyone in this room is important to our mission, so if I left someone out I hope you'll forgive me.

It's a privilege and honor to be here today as your national guest, and I thank you for the opportunity.

I'm proud to be here representing National Commander Nixon and National Adjutant Burgess, who also extend their extreme gratitude to all of you.

It's hard to believe that next year, DAV will celebrate 100 years of empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity. A lot has changed in our country and in DAV over the last century, but our commitment to the men and women who have served has never wavered.

We would have never gotten this far without all the great members in the Department of _____ **[state]**. Your hard work and dedication to veterans in this state is evident, and I thank you for your tremendous efforts.

Everyone here takes our organization's mission of service to veterans and their families seriously. It really feels like family when we gather at conventions and feel a strong, unified organization that is the epitome of dedication to our veterans. If you're here with us today, there's no doubt you are passionate about our organization and our nation's heroes.

You **are** DAV! You are the face of DAV to the veterans in your community. And your service and leadership is a sign of the great things DAV can do. Your dedication to your fellow veterans makes our mission possible.

You may be out of the military, but your battle buddies need you in the fight as we press to ensure your fellow veterans receive the benefits and medical care they deserve.

[Specific points related to the department the speaker wishes to address go here.]

Closing Remarks

DAV has over 260 professionally trained national service officers and 33 transition service officers, along with more than 2,500 chapter and

department service officers who are on the front lines serving veterans and their families every day.

These benefits experts are the ones who provide direct assistance to our injured and ill veterans—and they are the face of DAV to those who seek our help.

I'd like all our national service officers, transition service officers, and department and chapter service officers to please stand to be recognized.

<LEAD APPLAUSE >

You are the cornerstone of our mission of service. Many times, someone's first contact with DAV is when they meet one of you, and as many of you can personally attest, they come to us not knowing where else to turn. Thank you sincerely for what you do.

Another important service is the DAV Transportation Network. There are many veterans in your communities who are ill and injured—unable to drive or get a ride—who need help getting to their VA medical appointments.

While we have a great number of volunteer drivers, we still need more. The challenges are still there. Many of our volunteers are getting older. The baby-boom generation is working much longer. Consider working with your communities and speak with citizens about becoming a volunteer driver.

Last year, DAV launched a new site called Volunteer-for-Veterans-dot-org to give veterans and volunteers a new platform to request and give assistance. This nationwide resource is designed to connect volunteers with opportunities to lend a

helping hand to veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors.

It's essentially a database to match volunteers with volunteer opportunities serving veterans. Those opportunities are as limitless and varied as the needs of our nation's veterans, particularly those changed by wartime service.

Within its first year, Volunteer for Veterans had over 1,500 new registrants participate, but we need for more individuals to sign up—especially those who have volunteer requests.

Veterans, caregivers and survivors in need of assistance or mentoring can post opportunities based on their specific needs. Individuals who know veterans, caregivers and survivors who are in need of help can act as coordinators to populate opportunities on their behalf.

So please, visit Volunteer-for-Veterans-dot-org and sign up today. While you're at it, please encourage others in your community to do the same.

<PAUSE>

Now, the people in this room know better than anyone else that there is life after an injury or illness incurred while in service.

Life is not the same as before. It's not our "normal." But as we all know, when we surround ourselves with our fellow veterans, life starts to look a little brighter. Once we learn to accept our "new normal," we can challenge ourselves to build upon our successes. As we do, we can reach back and help our fellow veterans who are working their way toward a brighter life. We know the road they are traveling and have the empathy to feel their pain and frustrations. We also have the experience to help them get through life's obstacles and roadblocks.

This empathy and experience keep us “in the fight”—and DAV is deeply involved in that fight.

We’re fighting for benefits for caregivers of all generations. We’re fighting to ensure our nation keeps the promises it made to veterans. We’re fighting to tell lawmakers and other elected officials to do the right thing by veterans and their families.

<PAUSE>

I’m thankful every day I’m part of an organization where I get to enjoy the fellowship and camaraderie we have as veterans or as caregivers. We all earned it and it can never be taken away.

Our experiences during and after service strengthen the bonds we share with our veterans and our community. DAV is a family—one that I’m proud to be a part of.

I want to thank our counterparts in the Auxiliary, who serve with us and are a critical part of our mission. We have no better allies who understand service and sacrifice on a level that is unique and noteworthy.

The leadership of Auxiliary National Commander Ellen Timmerman and National Adjutant Pat Kemper provides vital support for our programs. The Auxiliary truly is a blessing to DAV.

We've accomplished much this past year, but there's more to be done. I know we're all going to see great things from the Department of _____ **[state]**.

It is in the best interests of every veteran, caregiver, and his or her family to have a united and strong DAV.

That's why we exist.

I'm honored to share the bonds of fellowship and friendship with you. I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world.

Thank you for all you do to serve the veteran community here in _____ **[state]** and for your hospitality.

Thank you. May God bless the men and women standing watch today, our veterans and their families, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.